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Report of the Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review*

Sao Tome and Principe

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Introduction

1. The Working Group on the Universal Periodic Review, established in accordance with Human Rights Council resolution 5/1, held its twenty-third session from 2 to 13 November 2015. The review of Sao Tome and Principe was held at the 16th meeting, on 11 November 2015. The delegation of Sao Tome and Principe was headed by the Minister of Justice and Human Rights, Roberto Pedro Raposo. At its 18th meeting, held on 13 November 2015, the Working Group adopted the report on Sao Tome and Principe.

2. On 13 January 2015, the Human Rights Council selected the following group of rapporteurs (troika) to facilitate the review of Sao Tome and Principe: Botswana, India and Paraguay.

3. In accordance with paragraph 15 of the annex to Human Rights Council resolution 5/1 and paragraph 5 of the annex to Council resolution 16/21, the following documents were issued for the review of Sao Tome and Principe:

(a) A national report (A/HRC/WG.6/23/STP/1);

(b) A compilation prepared by the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights (OHCHR) (A/HRC/WG.6/23/STP/2);

(c) A summary prepared by OHCHR (A/HRC/WG.6/23/STP/3).

4. A list of questions prepared in advance by Germany, Liechtenstein, Slovenia, Spain and the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland was transmitted to Sao Tome and Principe through the troika. These questions are available on the extranet of the Working Group.

I. Summary of the proceedings of the review process

A. Presentation by the State under review

5. Roberto Pedro Raposo, the Minister of Justice and Human Rights of Sao Tome and Principe, introduced the national report for the second universal periodic review.

6. After gaining independence on 12 July 1975, Sao Tome and Principe had determined to build a democratic State underpinned by fundamental human rights and respect for the principles enshrined in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

7. As a United Nations Member State, Sao Tome and Principe had presented its first report in February 2011, during the tenth session of the universal periodic review. The review process had generated a range of recommendations from the States participating in the interactive dialogue.

8. In order to highlight the progress made, challenges encountered and good practices deployed during the review period (2011-2015), the national report had been drawn up addressing the recommendations accepted by Sao Tome and Principe at the tenth session of the universal periodic review, the aim being to demonstrate the extent to which commitments for the promotion and protection of human rights had been fulfilled.

9. As the government body responsible for coordinating and drafting the report, the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights had established an interministerial commission

to oversee the process and had requested input from other government institutions and from civil society in order to encourage greater inclusion and the participation of all.

10. A public consultation workshop with the participation of State bodies and civil society organizations had also been organized in support of the drafting process.

11. The delegation stated that protecting and promoting the human rights enshrined in the Constitution of Sao Tome and Principe were the cornerstones for the construction of an independent, sovereign State committed to building a just, inclusive and cohesive society in which human rights were respected.

12. The delegation emphasized that the consolidation of democracy had brought with it a reinforcement of the rule of law, along with participatory forms of public oversight and a range of structural reforms in various socioeconomic and political fields, as well as in the administration of justice. That progress had been achieved with full respect for international treaties and conventions, integrating and applying the provisions of international human rights instruments in domestic legislation.

13. The delegation stated that the Government was aware that the justice system should be organized to serve its users, prioritizing the specialization of courts so as to give citizens access to a better system of justice.

14. The delegation highlighted that civil society had been involved in the development of public policies, including, in particular, in the preparation of participatory budgets.

15. In its governance programme, the country's sixteenth constitutional Government had identified three key problems as priorities: unemployment, which affected a broad segment of the population; the high cost of living, which had a major impact on the most vulnerable population groups; and the ever-widening gap between the rulers and the ruled.

16. The delegation also highlighted that, with support from their development partners, the State authorities had helped make progress in the fight against malaria and tuberculosis. The number of malaria deaths had fallen from 0.009 per 1,000 inhabitants in 2010 to 0.004 per 1,000 inhabitants in 2012. People living with HIV/AIDS had also been receiving better treatment.

17. Sao Tome and Principe faced a number of challenges, including a high rate of unemployment; an underdeveloped, bureaucratic and overcentralized public sector; an inadequately educated and poorly trained workforce; severe social and regional disparities; an external image unfavourable to direct private investment; a persistent inability to concentrate its limited resources; the size of its market; the lack of economic and social infrastructures; and the limited capacities of its private sector.

18. The sixteenth constitutional Government had undertaken to create the conditions necessary for economic diversification and growth; to strengthen the private sector so that it was better equipped to attract foreign direct investment; to ensure efficient management of public finances; to invest in modernizing economic and social infrastructures and strengthening the nation's social cohesion and its credibility overseas; to adopt transparent government policies; to strengthen local governance, external relations and cooperation; and to optimize human capital in order to lessen the challenges and ensure that human values were effectively promoted and protected.

19. Conscious of the many deficiencies still inherent in the justice system and their adverse effect on economic activity and the population in general, the sixteenth constitutional Government considered it vital to improve the reliability and accessibility of the justice system.

20. A number of steps had been taken to that end. The most important of those steps had been the adoption of the law on the judicial system; the creation of the position of investigating judge and establishment of a pretrial, investigative phase as a discrete phase of all legal proceedings; the drafting and adoption of criminal legislation and criminal procedure laws; the creation of the position of sentence enforcement judge; the adoption of the law on legal assistance and legal counsel; the adoption of the law on domestic violence; the establishment of a single administrative window for businesses; and various improvements to registry and notarial services, including their computerization.

21. With regard to international instruments, Sao Tome and Principe had ratified the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights.

22. Although Sao Tome and Principe had not yet ratified the other conventions, the delegation indicated that the State had adopted legal, institutional and administrative measures to guarantee all persons living within its territorial jurisdiction a free and dignified life in line with the principles of human rights.

23. The delegation added that the Government and its partners — particularly the United Nations Development Programme and the United Nations Centre for Human Rights and Democracy in Central Africa — had begun the process of establishing a national human rights institution in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (the Paris Principles). In April 2014 a seminar had been held in Sao Tome for that purpose, bringing together representatives of government bodies, civil society and United Nations agencies to consider which model for a national human rights institution was best suited to the national context.

24. The delegation reported that, while remaining mindful of the specific characteristics of the country, on 22 and 23 August 2015, during one of its ordinary meetings, the Council of Ministers had discussed the possibility of establishing an ombudsman's office and that legislation establishing the office was currently being drafted.

25. The delegation considered that the Constitution guaranteed the protection of all civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights for the State's citizens.

26. With regard to the promotion of women's rights and gender equality, the delegation reiterated that the Government had ratified the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women. It had also adopted both legislative and institutional measures in that field, thus demonstrating its commitment to eliminating all forms of discrimination against women and promoting gender equality.

27. The delegation stated that a national strategy for the promotion of gender equality and equity had been adopted and that the National Institute for the Promotion of Gender Equality and Equity had been mandated to oversee the promotion and implementation of government policy for the advancement of women, gender equality and equity throughout the country.

28. With regard to the protection of children, the delegation recalled that Sao Tome and Principe had ratified the main international treaties: specifically, the Convention on the Rights of the Child; the International Labour Organization (ILO) Minimum Age Convention, 1973 (No. 138); the ILO Worst Forms of Child Labour Convention, 1999 (No. 182); the ILO Labour Inspection Convention, 1947 (No. 81); the ILO Forced

Labour Convention, 1930 (No. 29) and the ILO Abolition of Forced Labour Convention, 1957 (No. 105).

29. As a State party to these conventions, Sao Tome and Principe had taken steps to safeguard the rights of the child. A central aim of the Constitution and of national laws and public policies to address discrimination, exploitation, sexual violence, trafficking and child abuse was to guarantee children's development and to promote and protect their rights in line with the principles established in the Convention on the Rights of the Child.

30. The delegation emphasized that the new Penal Code contained several articles aimed at protecting the rights of the child and at establishing severe penalties for violations of those rights.

31. Working in conjunction with the social partners and those engaged in the country's development, the Government had demonstrated its commitment to the protection of children by drafting, approving and adopting a national social protection strategy and policy; issuing guidelines concerning children in alternative care; developing a programme for the first 1,000 most critical days of a child's life; launching a parental education programme; and running national advertising campaigns to raise awareness of and disseminate information about the rights of children. It had also drafted and approved the first national policy document on the protection of children in Sao Tome and Principe. The policy document set out guidelines for preventive action, participatory activities and the punishment of persons responsible for any form of violence against or abuse or exploitation of children and was an instrument of key importance for the child protection system in Sao Tome and Principe.

32. In conclusion, the delegation, speaking on behalf of the Government, reiterated its awareness of the importance of international treaties and conventions for the protection and promotion of human rights and democracy. It added that those conventions and treaties would be submitted to the National Assembly for approval and subsequent ratification later in the month.

B. Interactive dialogue and responses by the State under review

33. During the interactive dialogue, 51 delegations made statements. Recommendations made during the dialogue can be found in section II of the present report.

34. Angola expressed its satisfaction with the process of reform of the justice sector that the Government had implemented, which was aimed at improving the quality of the judicial system. It encouraged Sao Tome and Principe to continue its efforts aimed at improving the conditions of prisoners, taking account of their human rights. It also supported the measures taken to curb the rural exodus and improve the socioeconomic conditions of people in rural areas. Angola made recommendations.

35. Canada welcomed the steps taken by Sao Tome and Principe to implement the Millennium Development Goals. It commended the country for the progress achieved on ensuring primary education for all and reducing child mortality. Canada expressed concern about continued reports of pervasive domestic violence, and of women's reluctance to bring legal action. It also stressed the importance of addressing these issues, including by raising awareness about domestic violence. Canada made recommendations.

36. Chad noted with satisfaction the consultative procedure used for the elaboration of the national report, and the significant advances in human rights including the

ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination Against Women, the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the African Charter on Human and Peoples' Rights. Chad made no recommendations.

37. Chile encouraged Sao Tome and Principe to continue on the path of promotion and protection of human rights. It also noted the progress achieved in the field of access to health services, such as coverage given to pregnant women, children under 5 years old and the chronically ill. Chile made recommendations.

38. The Congo welcomed the adoption of laws regarding the establishment of a juvenile court and the review of the Penal Code for child victims of abuse. It enquired about the measures taken to combat more effectively all kinds of discrimination against vulnerable populations, cases of early marriage, and the rate of young women failing or dropping out of school and of children whose births are not registered. The Congo made recommendations.

39. Costa Rica urged Sao Tome and Principe to continue strengthening institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights and to establish a human rights institution in accordance with the principles relating to the status of national institutions for the promotion and protection of human rights (Paris Principles). It noted with concern the identified cases of corporal punishment of children, and urged the creation of the necessary legal regulations to protect children, consistent with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child. Costa Rica made recommendations.

40. Cuba highlighted the steps taken by Sao Tome and Principe regarding the implementation of key international and regional human rights instruments and congratulated it on ratifying the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It highlighted the reform of the justice sector and the ongoing work to restructure it, and noted the progress made in reducing child mortality in the country and the efforts to reduce poverty. Cuba made recommendations.

41. The Democratic Republic of the Congo noted the success of Sao Tome and Principe in the areas of food security, the supply of drinking water, and transparency in the extractive industry, as well as the progress made on women's and children's rights, and the development of an ambitious programme for a deep reform of the justice sector. Nevertheless, it indicated that there were still many pending issues. The Democratic Republic of the Congo made recommendations.

42. Denmark was pleased to note that Sao Tome and Principe had accepted the recommendations to ratify the Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment. It hoped that concrete measures were being taken to honour that commitment and said that it would be grateful if the delegation could elaborate on the measures taken. Denmark emphasized that the Convention against Torture Initiative stood ready to assist the Government in advancing on that issue. Denmark made recommendations.

43. Djibouti welcomed the progress made by Sao Tome and Principe in promoting and protecting human rights. Djibouti made recommendations.

44. Egypt noted the 2012-2016 national strategy for combating poverty, the amendments to the criminal code to criminalize exploitation of minors and sexual abuse, and the steps taken to create a tribunal for minors. It encouraged the Government to take the necessary practical measures to ensure that this tribunal becomes operational and is provided with the administrative and financial resources necessary for it to function correctly. Egypt made recommendations.

45. Equatorial Guinea noted the recent measures taken by Sao Tome and Principe in support of the plan for 2015-2030, which were contributing to building a democratic society and to respect for fundamental rights. It congratulated Sao Tome and Principe on the creation of a government department dedicated to human rights, namely the Ministry of Justice and Human Rights. It also noted with satisfaction all initiatives to improve the protection and promotion of children's rights. Equatorial Guinea made recommendations.

46. Estonia welcomed the initiative to introduce digital public services and invited the Government to activate the system and make full use of it. It noted that the revision of the Penal Code in 2012 was a positive step. Nevertheless, the situation of children was alarming, and the issues of child abuse and exploitation, harmful traditional practices and corporal punishment needed more attention. It invited the Government to commit fully to improving the situation of children. Estonia made recommendations.

47. Ethiopia highlighted the adoption of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan 2012-2016 and the achievements made so far. It commended Sao Tome and Principe on its commitment to fulfilling the economic, social and cultural rights of its people with an allocation of increased budgetary resources for progress in the areas of education and health. Ethiopia made recommendations.

48. France welcomed the progress made by Sao Tome and Principe, in particular the recent ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the decriminalization of relations between consenting adults of the same sex in accordance with the principle of non-discrimination. France made recommendations.

49. Gabon welcomed the measures taken to ensure the promotion and protection of human rights and to improve the normative and institutional framework. It noted with satisfaction the adoption of the law on the judicial system and the revision in 2012 of the Penal Code. It particularly welcomed the establishment of the consultation centre on domestic violence and encouraged Sao Tome and Principe to persevere in the promotion and protection of human rights. Gabon made no recommendations.

50. Germany appreciated the progress made by Sao Tome and Principe since its last review, in particular the strengthening of democratic processes. It also welcomed the Government's efforts in combating child labour and in improving the administration of justice. Germany encouraged the Government to continue improving its human rights record in fields such as children's rights, gender equality and detention facilities. Germany made recommendations.

51. Maldives welcomed the establishment of the Counselling Centre against Domestic Violence as well as the importance attached to health. It noted positively the adoption of the Education and Training Strategy 2007-2017. Maldives made recommendations.

52. Indonesia commended the continued engagement of Sao Tome and Principe with the universal periodic review process. It noted a number of measures that had been taken to manage the risk of exploitation of migrants. However, it believed that further efforts could be made, including by strengthening legal frameworks. Indonesia also noted the efforts to eradicate acts of torture and cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment through, inter alia, revision of the Penal Code and adoption of the law on the judicial system. It made recommendations.

53. Ireland commended the new Penal Code, which ceased to criminalize consenting same-sex relations between adults. It encouraged Sao Tome and Principe to take the necessary steps to combat discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex persons in all areas of life. Ireland welcomed positive developments in

promoting rights of children and commended the steps taken to criminalize the trafficking of minors. However, it remained concerned at reports of the trafficking and exploitation of children and at the barriers to rehabilitation of child victims. It noted that little progress had been made towards establishing a national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles, despite Sao Tome and Principe having accepted all recommendations in this regard in 2011. Ireland made recommendations.

54. Ghana lauded the establishment of the counselling centre in Sao Tome and Principe to address issues related to domestic violence. While welcoming the improvements in the registering of births, it expressed concern that significant numbers of children still did not have birth certificates. Ghana made recommendations.

55. Mexico welcomed the increase in the birth registration rate. As a promoter of the resolution on birth registration, it congratulated Sao Tome and Principe on this progress and encouraged continuing efforts conducive to achieving the registration of all births. Furthermore, Mexico valued the implementation of the Education and Training Strategy 2007-2017. Mexico offered to share good practices and experiences in the field of human rights that may contribute to the implementation of relevant recommendations. It made recommendations.

56. Montenegro welcomed significant progress in providing primary health care services, and increases in the Government's allocations for health and education. It enquired about the strategies and plans for improving the accessibility and quality of education, in particular for girls, children living in rural areas, pregnant adolescents and adolescent mothers. Montenegro noted concerns of the Committee on the Rights of the Child. It enquired about action taken to provide protection and rehabilitation for children in street situations, social reintegration of child victims of sexual abuse, trafficking and exploitation, and the establishment of a legal framework for adoptions. Montenegro made recommendations.

57. Morocco appreciated Sao Tome and Principe's constant concern for strengthening its national human rights architecture. It commended the implementation of justice sector reforms that were aimed at improving the quality of the judiciary, fighting corruption and accelerating judicial proceedings. It congratulated Sao Tome and Principe on reaching the first Millennium Development Goal by the effective coordination of actions in the area of food security. Morocco made recommendations.

58. Mozambique noted the political difficulties that Sao Tome and Principe had gone through, which may explain, in part, the challenges faced in the realm of human rights. It welcomed the establishment of the Counselling Centre against Domestic Violence, as well as the revision of the Penal Code which now included provisions on sexual abuse, exploitation of minors and child trafficking. Mozambique praised the adoption of the law on the judiciary system and of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan 2012-2016. It made recommendations.

59. Namibia welcomed the considerable improvement of the birth registration rate and trusted that Sao Tome and Principe would continue ensuring that all children were registered as soon as possible after birth. It commended the adoption of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan 2012-2016 and asked about progress made in implementing that plan. Namibia made recommendations.

60. The Netherlands welcomed the adoption of the law on the judicial system which provided for the creation of a juvenile court, and the establishment of the Counselling Centre against Domestic Violence. It noted with appreciation the decriminalization of same-sex sexual activity between consenting adults, but noted that there was as yet no

legal protection against discrimination based on sexual orientation or gender identity. It regretted that commitments made during the previous review of Sao Tome and Principe regarding the protection of child rights and the ratification of major international human rights instruments had not, to date, been followed up on. The Netherlands made recommendations.

61. Nigeria expressed solidarity with the Government and people of Sao Tome and Principe and commended their continued constructive engagement with OHCHR. It appreciated efforts made towards the establishment of the Counselling Centre against Domestic Violence. Nigeria commended efforts made towards providing access to safe drinking water and the recent positive developments recorded in the area of primary health-care services, and in that connection, acknowledged the significant progress that had been made in reducing infant mortality rates. Nigeria made recommendations.

62. The Philippines recognized the efforts to pursue judicial reforms and the measures aimed at implementing recommendations of the last review, which had been made with the support of international partners of Sao Tome and Principe. It encouraged Sao Tome and Principe to continue to take steps towards the ratification of core international human rights treaties and to align its domestic legislation with international human rights standards. It appreciated the strategies for protecting the human rights of vulnerable people, such as women, children, the elderly and persons with disabilities, but noted the need to enhance and monitor the implementation of these programmes. The Philippines made recommendations.

63. Poland acknowledged the efforts made to comply with the recommendations accepted during the first review of Sao Tome and Principe. It noted with appreciation some progress in the area of the rights of minors, such as including provisions on sexual abuse, exploitation of minors and child trafficking in the Penal Code. It also appreciated the improvement in the birth registration rate and the creation of the juvenile court, while recognizing that there was still room for further improvement in the protection of children's rights. Poland made recommendations.

64. Portugal commended the decision to provide the Office of the Ombudsman with the necessary competences for acquiring the status of a human rights institution. It welcomed the establishment of the Counselling Centre against Domestic Violence. Portugal made recommendations.

65. Rwanda commended the adoption of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan 2012-2016 and the recent increases in the State's budgetary allocations for health and education. It welcomed the revision in 2012 of the Penal Code to explicitly include provisions on sexual abuse, exploitation of minors and child trafficking. Rwanda noted the adoption of the law on the judicial system, which provided for the creation of a juvenile court, as a positive step towards justice and the rule of law. It made recommendations.

66. Senegal congratulated Sao Tome and Principe on the standing invitation extended to mandate holders and took note of the development of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan 2012-2016. It noted several measures contributing to the promotion of economic and social rights: the free-of-charge primary health care and medication for children under the age of 5 and for pregnant women, the efforts made towards decreasing the infant mortality rate, and the access to drinking water for 60 per cent of its rural residents. Senegal invited the international community to provide Sao Tome and Principe with all necessary assistance. Senegal made recommendations.

67. Sierra Leone noted the recent ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, the national poverty reduction strategy and the justice sector reforms. It urged Sao Tome and Principe to reinstate the Child Rights Committee and to grant it the necessary resources. Sierra Leone welcomed the various strategies for

promoting food security, as well as the establishment of a 30 per cent quota for the participation of women in Parliament. It encouraged Sao Tome and Principe to ensure free birth registration and to facilitate the issuance of birth certificates. It believed that fostering regional partnerships would be vital in assisting the country to develop sustainable strategies to mitigate and adapt to the adverse impact of climate change. Sierra Leone made recommendations.

68. Slovenia noted positive developments that had taken place since the first review, such as the 2012 revision of the Penal Code to include provisions on sexual abuse, the exploitation of minors and child trafficking, the establishment of the Counselling Centre against Domestic Violence, improvements in birth registration, reductions in infant and under-five mortality, and an increase in primary school enrolment. It was, however, concerned about violations of child rights and the alleged excessive use of force during demonstrations. It made recommendations.

69. South Africa noted that Sao Tome and Principe had made efforts towards implementing the recommendations accepted during its first-cycle review, notwithstanding all the challenges. South Africa made recommendations.

70. Spain acknowledged the efforts made by Sao Tome and Principe in the field of human rights, including the recent ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities and the establishment of the Counselling Centre against Domestic Violence. It stated that major progress had been made with the revision of the Penal Code, which included provisions on sexual abuse, child trafficking and exploitation of minors. It made recommendations.

71. Timor-Leste commended the establishment of the Counselling Centre against Domestic Violence, the adoption of the Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan and the increases in the State's budgetary allocations for health and education. It also praised the revision of the Penal Code in 2012 to include provisions on sexual abuse, exploitation and child trafficking. Timor-Leste made recommendations.

72. Togo was pleased that Sao Tome and Principe had continued to improve the quality of accessibility to education for all, and noted with satisfaction the improvement in the birth registration rate and the measures taken to combat domestic violence. It also commended the revision of the Penal Code in 2012, which had introduced provisions on sexual violence, exploitation of minors and child trafficking, among others. It made recommendations.

73. Turkey commended the efforts made for the promotion and protection of human rights and encouraged Sao Tome and Principe to implement specific measures within the framework defined by international human rights instruments. It noted with satisfaction strategic actions to eliminate discrimination against women, to combat poverty, to take care of street children, to ensure free health services for young children, and to increase the primary school enrolment rate. It made recommendations.

74. Ukraine commended the measures aimed at ensuring that national legislation was harmonized with the main principles and standards of international human rights documents, as well as the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It also noted that information about specific measures and activities for the promotion and protection of human rights during 2011-2015 could have been better reflected in the report. It made recommendations.

75. The United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland recognized the significant challenges that Sao Tome and Principe had faced to tackle poverty, corruption and a low educational attainment rate. It welcomed the significant efforts made on education, gender parity and health but recognized that improvements were still needed, including on prison conditions. It made recommendations.

76. The United States of America commended the human rights record of Sao Tome and Principe, particularly with regard to women's rights, religious freedom, free and fair elections and peaceful transfer of power. However, it remained concerned that some minors were engaged in child labour through domestic service and street work, hindering them from completing their primary education. It made recommendations.

77. Uruguay encouraged Sao Tome and Principe to redouble efforts to increase its participation in the international human rights mechanisms, in cooperation with different actors, including OHCHR. It commended the 2012 revision of the Penal Code and encouraged Sao Tome and Principe to consider ratifying international human rights instruments. It was concerned that domestic violence and ill-treatment of children seemed prevalent in the country. It made recommendations.

78. The Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela noted the ratification of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities, and was pleased at the steps taken to create a national human rights institution in conformity with the Paris Principles. It highlighted the policies to eliminate illiteracy and commended the fact that basic education was compulsory and free. It made recommendations.

79. Algeria congratulated Sao Tome and Principe on its preparation of the programme to reform the judiciary in 2015, and on the steps taken to harmonize domestic law with international human rights standards. It also noted with satisfaction the efforts made in the fields of education, health and poverty reduction, despite economic difficulties. It made recommendations.

80. Cabo Verde highlighted the successes in food security and agricultural development, combating malaria and HIV/AIDS, and supplying drinking water to the population; transparency in the mining industry; the announcement of the imminent ratification of core international human rights instruments; the adoption of a programme to reform the judicial sector and an action plan for 2016-2019; and the projects to improve the penitentiary system. It made recommendations.

81. Argentina welcomed the delegation of Sao Tome and Principe and thanked it for the presentation of its national report. It congratulated Sao Tome and Principe on its adoption of the Education Training Strategy 2007-2017 with inclusive education programmes. It made recommendations.

82. Armenia appreciated the steps taken to promote the right to health, particularly the primary health-care services that provided free consultations and medication to children under 5 years of age, pregnant women, chronically ill persons and children under the national school health programme. It also encouraged Sao Tome and Principe to ensure equal opportunities for men and women to access all levels of education. It made recommendations.

83. Australia commended the appointment of the first Minister for Justice and Human Rights, the priority given to addressing domestic violence, and the legalization of same-sex relations between consenting adults. It also welcomed the work being undertaken to establish a national human rights institution in line with the Paris Principles, and the establishment of an interministerial human rights commission. It made recommendations.

84. The Minister of Justice and Human Rights of Sao Tome and Principe thanked the speakers for their recommendations and their recognition of the progress that Sao Tome and Principe had made in relative terms since submitting its first report in 2011. He reaffirmed the Government's commitment to the ratification of international treaties in the light of their importance for the promotion and protection of human

rights. He reiterated that the Government had approved domestic administrative procedures that should ensure ratification of those conventions in the very near future, given that most of them had already been signed. The implementation of all those conventions was helping to protect human rights and guarantee peace, security and democracy in United Nations Member States.

85. The Minister emphasized that Sao Tome and Principe planned to continue the reform process under way and had in fact adopted its Code of Criminal Procedure even before ratifying all the relevant international conventions.

86. Sao Tome and Principe had already signed the conventions concerning child labour and guarantees of civil and political rights but had not yet ratified them. The Government was continuing its efforts to ensure that all those international conventions were ratified by the end of 2015, so allowing for a further reinforcement of the democratic rule of law with full respect for and protection of human rights.

87. Sao Tome and Principe was a sovereign, independent State underpinned by the rule of law and committed to building a free and fair society in which human rights were protected, as provided in article 1 of the Constitution. Citizens were free to exercise democratic political activities; Sao Tome and Principe had demonstrated its maturity as a democratic State by holding elections that had been free and transparent, with constructive support from international observers.

88. The Minister reiterated that the Government was firmly committed to implementing the recommendations of the Human Rights Council, to ratifying all conventions and to aligning national legislation with international best practices for the fight against all forms of discrimination against children, the protection of women and respect for political rights.

89. In response to the written questions submitted in advance by the States speaking at the Human Rights Council, the delegation stated that the Constitution of Sao Tome and Principe enshrined the principle of the physical and psychological inviolability of the person, including the child. It also established that no person could be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment; that criminal procedures should provide full guarantees for the rights of defendants; and that any evidence obtained through torture, coercion or violations of the physical or psychological integrity of the person should be null and void.

90. The Constitution further provided that children had the right to receive from the State and from society the respect and protection essential to their full development. The Penal Code adopted in 2012 reinforced those principles. Article 152 of the Code established a prison sentence of 4 years for any parent or guardian of a minor under 16 years of age, or any other person responsible for such a minor's care, who treated the minor cruelly or with selfish intent, physically abused the minor or neglected the minor's health-care needs.

91. Act No. 11/2008 on domestic and family violence established measures to prevent and punish domestic violence. Act No. 12/2008 on the reinforcement of legal mechanisms for the protection of victims of domestic and family violence established a prevention and support mechanism for victims of spousal and family violence (the Counselling Centre against Domestic Violence). To provide for enforcement, specialized units had been established in 2013 by courts dealing specifically with issues affecting minors.

92. A number of awareness-raising seminars and campaigns on the protection of the rights of the child had been organized with support from the United Nations, the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF).

93. In the course of that year, the Government had approved the first national policy for the protection of children. The policy provided guidelines for preventive action, participatory activities and the punishment of persons responsible for any form of violence against or abuse or exploitation of children and was an instrument of key importance for the child protection system in Sao Tome and Principe.

94. The Ministry of Justice and Human Rights had carried out a review of all treaties, whether or not they had been signed by Sao Tome and Principe, and a special meeting of the Council of Ministers had been scheduled to discuss further accessions and submit the relevant treaties to the National Assembly for approval and subsequent ratification.

95. The Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women had since been ratified.

96. The Government of Sao Tome and Principe intended to extend preschool education progressively to all children above a certain age; to build and equip more schools and classrooms to cover schooling plans at all levels of education; and to ensure a high-quality education for children with special needs through training for specialist teachers and the development of appropriate infrastructures, thereby furthering progress towards the goal of universal education and training.

97. The Counselling Centre against Domestic Violence had been created to serve as a specialized institution working to prevent domestic and sexual violence against women, men and children. Training and awareness-raising for all stakeholders were other important components of the Government's work in that area, as were advocacy campaigns to foster behavioural change.

98. The State had also adopted a national gender mainstreaming policy and established an autonomous body to oversee the policy's implementation.

99. Gender equality was a reality in legislation and public policy, but there were various impediments to de facto equality, including domestic violence, which mainly affected women and children.

100. To accelerate progress towards de facto equality, in 2009 the parliament had adopted a resolution recommending the introduction of a 30 per cent quota for women's representation in decision-making bodies.

101. Among the positive effects of those initiatives were improved access to education and women's increasing involvement in the country's political, economic, social and cultural affairs.

102. Participation by women and women's organizations had been key to the success of those initiatives.

103. The national strategy for the promotion of gender equality was a document outlining general policies for action in that area. Measures to combat domestic violence were contained in legislation, including specifically the Penal Code and the law against domestic violence.

104. The new Penal Code, promulgated in July 2012, contained a definition of the offence of trafficking in human beings and increased the penalties for trafficking when it was associated with prostitution, child pornography, kidnapping and exploitation of prostitution.

105. To support those measures, the State had also strengthened border controls and increased cooperation with the International Criminal Police Organization — INTERPOL. In addition, training had been provided for officers of the criminal investigation police and the immigration and border control services. For the first time

in the nation's history, the Government had formulated and approved a national policy for the protection of children in Sao Tome and Principe. The policy provided guidelines for preventive action, participatory activities and the punishment of persons responsible for any form of violence against or abuse or exploitation of children and was an instrument of key importance for the child protection system in Sao Tome and Principe.

106. In addition, the Government had stepped up its campaigns to raise awareness of trafficking in children throughout the country. For the first time in the nation's history, the Government had formulated and approved a national policy for the protection of children in Sao Tome and Principe. The policy provided guidelines for preventive action, participatory activities and the punishment of persons responsible for any form of violence against or abuse or exploitation of children and was an instrument of key importance for the child protection system in Sao Tome and Principe.

II. Conclusions and/or recommendations**

107. **The recommendations formulated during the interactive dialogue/listed below have been examined by Sao Tome and Principe and enjoy the support of Sao Tome and Principe:**

107.1 **Continue to ratify the international conventions on human rights (Angola);**

107.2 **Strive to accede to core human rights instruments relevant to the enjoyment of human rights for all persons (Nigeria);**

107.3 **Consider ratifying or acceding to the core international human rights treaties (Ukraine);**

107.4 **Complete the ratification of key international instruments that Sao Tomé and Principe has signed, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Canada);**

107.5 **Ratify the main human rights instruments, in particular the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the Convention against Torture (Costa Rica);**

107.6 **Ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its two Optional Protocols (Germany);**

107.7 **Ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its first Optional Protocol allowing individual complaints (Ghana);**

107.8 **Ratify the Second Optional Protocol to the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, aiming at the abolition of the death penalty (Montenegro);**

107.9 **Ratify the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (Armenia);**

107.10 **Accelerate the process of ratification of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the**

** The conclusions and recommendations have not been edited

Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination and the Convention against Torture (Turkey);

107.11 **Ratify all the core international human rights treaties to which the country is not yet a party, including the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention against Torture as well as the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (Brazil);**

107.12 **Finalise the accession to the international instruments on the protection of human rights signed by the country, in particular the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its second Optional Protocol aiming at the abolition of the death penalty, the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the Convention against Torture and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (France);**

107.13 **Ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Armenia);**

107.14 **Consider ratification of the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and its Second Optional Protocol (Namibia);**

107.15 **Ratify the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (Australia);**

107.16 **Consider ratifying the following international instruments: the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Democratic Republic of the Congo);**

107.17 **Ratify following international legal instruments, respectively: (i) the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights and its Optional Protocol; (ii) the Convention against Torture and its Optional Protocol; and finally, the three Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Portugal);**

107.18 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (Ghana);**

107.19 **Intensify efforts to ratify the Convention against Torture (Denmark);**

107.20 **Continue its efforts to ratify the Convention against Torture (Indonesia);**

107.21 **Ratify the Convention against Torture and its Optional Protocol (Ghana);**

107.22 **Ratify the Convention against Torture (Montenegro);**

107.23 **Consider ratifying the Optional Protocol to the Convention against Torture (Rwanda);**

107.24 **Ratify the Convention against Torture, signed in 2000 (Senegal);**

107.25 **Ratify the Convention against Torture, ICERD and ICCPR (Spain);**

107.26 **Ratify and fully implement the Convention against Torture and its Optional Protocol, and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**

107.27 **Ratify the six core international human rights instruments, including the Convention against Torture, the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance, the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (Sierra Leone);**

107.28 **Develop and implement the policies that promote the rights of the child and accede to the Optional Protocols to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict and on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (Estonia);**

107.29 **Develop a comprehensive strategy and national plan of action for the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Sierra Leone);**

107.30 **Ratify the core international human rights treaties, signed by Sao Tome and Principe, as well as accede to the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography and the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (Slovenia);**

107.31 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography, as recommended by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in 2013 (Togo);**

107.32 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (Uruguay);**

107.33 **Ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the involvement of children in armed conflict (Uruguay);**

107.34 **Sign and ratify the Optional Protocol to the Convention on the Rights of the Child on the sale of children, child prostitution and child pornography (Australia);**

107.35 **Continue its efforts to ratify the International Convention on the Protection of the Rights of All Migrant Workers and Members of Their Families (Indonesia);**

107.36 **Accede to the International Convention for the Protection of All Persons from Enforced Disappearance (France);**

107.37 **Ratify the Rome Statute of the ICC in order to finalise the accession to this instrument signed in 2000 (France);**

107.38 **Ratify the Rome Statute on the Establishment of the ICC (Ghana);**

107.39 **Ratify the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Poland);**

107.40 **Ratify the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide (Armenia);**

107.41 **Take measures to establish the National Child Rights Committee with the financial resources necessary to operate (Costa Rica);**

107.42 **Operationalize the National Child Rights Committee in order to ensure the effective promotion and protection of their rights and to enable their integral development (Democratic Republic of the Congo);**

107.43 **Perpetuate the measures carried out to establish a National Child Rights Committee (Equatorial Guinea);**

107.44 **Create a special mechanism responsible for independent child rights monitoring (Estonia);**

107.45 **Operationalize the National Human Rights Institution and the National Child Rights Committee (Morocco);**

107.46 **Allocate sufficient resources to the National Child Rights Committee in order to reinstate the functions of this Committee (Namibia);**

107.47 **Consider establishing an independent mechanism for monitoring children's rights and providing necessary financial resources for its functioning (Poland);**

107.48 **Revitalize the National Child Rights Committee and allocate it sufficient resources for the carrying out of its mandate (Senegal);**

107.49 **Establish an independent mechanism to monitor the rights of the child, in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child and the recommendations from the Committee on the Rights of the Child (Spain);**

107.50 **Consider the creation of a body responsible for the follow up of the implementation of international human rights treaty obligations and implementation of recommendations of United Nations bodies with competence in this area (Portugal);**

107.51 **Make efforts aimed at preparing further National reports for future UPR cycles well in advance (Ukraine);**

107.52 **Cooperate with Treaty Bodies in submitting its reports regularly (Congo);**

107.53 **Submit overdue reports to Treaty Bodies (Ethiopia);**

107.54 **Strengthen its cooperation with Treaty Bodies (Senegal);**

107.55 **Submit its long overdue reports to the relevant Treaty Bodies (Sierra Leone);**

107.56 **Present overdue reports to the Committee on the Elimination of Discrimination against Women (Ukraine);**

107.57 **Provide women with equal access to education and employment opportunities, and give priority attention to women-led households in the Government's poverty-alleviation and food security programs (Philippines);**

107.58 **Improve prison conditions in the country, focusing particularly on the medical care and nutrition of inmates (United States of America);**

107.59 **Provide adequate resources to enable the Counselling Centre to discharge its mandate more effectively (Ghana);**

107.60 **Ensure the allocation of adequate resources to the Counselling Center against Domestic Violence, in order to enable its full functioning (Portugal);**

107.61 **Remove any rule authorizing corporal punishment and incorporate effective sanctions for such practices, as well as carry out general awareness-raising campaigns against ill-treatment of children that emphasize the peaceful resolution of violent relationships (Chile);**

107.62 **Take all necessary measures to provide street children with protection and rehabilitation (Egypt);**

107.63 **Prohibit all corporal punishment of children in all settings and repeal the right to punish children "appropriately and moderately" in the Family Law (Estonia);**

107.64 **Fully enforce the prohibition of child labour in the informal, agricultural and domestic work, including by ensuring the right to education to all children and by defining a list of hazardous work (Slovenia);**

107.65 **Develop programmes and policies of prevention, recovery, and social reintegration of child victims (Spain);**

107.66 **Ensure that laws prohibiting children from participating in hazardous occupations or activities are precise and enforced (United States of America);**

107.67 **Enact without delay legislation for the protection of children, such as prohibition of corporal punishment under any circumstances, and to swiftly work towards the ratification of the human rights instruments to which São Tomé and Príncipe has earlier committed itself, namely the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights; the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination, the Convention against Torture, and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court (Netherlands);**

107.68 **Create conditions and human and material resources to make the justice system more effective (Angola);**

107.69 **Expedite essential reforms of the judiciary (Ukraine);**

107.70 **Implement Law 7/2010 that creates a special court for children, that is able to address the particularities of these disputes (Chile);**

107.71 **Consider increasing the resources of social protection, in particular for families suffering from poverty (Egypt);**

107.72 **Intensify efforts to engage with development partners to support policies and programs that would advance the socio-economic rights of its people (Philippines);**

107.73 **Continue to strengthen its social policies and programmes in order to improve the quality of life of the people, particularly the most excluded sectors (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);**

107.74 **Take necessary measures to reduce poverty, in particular among women and children (Algeria);**

107.75 **Continue to develop actions to improve the right to food of the whole population, including through the implementation of the National Program of Food and Nutritional Security (Cuba);**

107.76 **Improve access to drinking water and sanitation through a national action plan (Turkey);**

107.77 **Continue efforts to improve access of all the population to drinking water and sanitation (Algeria);**

107.78 **Continue its efforts to improve human rights, especially in the field of health (Djibouti);**

107.79 **Extend the scope of free basic health care to groups that are not yet covered by this benefit (Chile);**

107.80 **Establish follow-up to carry through the teaching and training strategy (Equatorial Guinea);**

107.81 **Continue working on improvement of quality education (Ethiopia);**

107.82 **Take appropriate measures to improve the accessibility and quality of education (Maldives);**

107.83 **Further strengthen the ongoing policies in the field of education (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);**

107.84 **Assist pregnant teenagers and teenage mothers to continue their education and guarantee the enjoyment of their fundamental rights (Djibouti);**

107.85 **Continue to address efforts to mitigate effects of climate change, both nationally and internationally (Maldives).**

108. **The following enjoy the support of Sao Tome and Principe, which considers that they are already implemented or in the process of implementation:**

108.1 **Ratify the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (Congo);**

108.2 **Strengthen the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities in the national legislation (Cuba);**

108.3 **Establish a National Human Rights Institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (Chile);**

108.4 **Establish a National Human Rights Institution in accordance with the Paris Principles, in order to strengthen the national system of human rights alongside the recently established Ministry of Human Rights (Democratic Republic of the Congo);**

108.5 **Consider establishing a National Human Rights Institution (Egypt);**

108.6 **Continue the institutional framework initiated to establish a National Human Rights Institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (Equatorial Guinea);**

108.7 **Establish a National Human Rights Institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (France);**

108.8 **Establish without delay a national human rights institution that complies with the Paris Principles (Ireland);**

108.9 Take urgent steps to establish an independent National Human Rights Institution free from governmental control, and in full compliance with the Paris Principles (Ghana);

108.10 Establish a national human rights institution, in accordance with the Paris Principles (Mexico);

108.11 Set up a National Human Rights Institution, in accordance with the Paris Principles (Mozambique);

108.12 Register all children immediately after birth and ensure that birth registration legislation is in accordance with the Convention on the Rights of the Child, as recommended by the Committee on the Rights of the Child in its 2013 Concluding Observations (Canada);

108.13 Redouble national measures aimed at ensuring that every child in the country is issued with a birth certificate promptly at birth (Ghana);

108.14 Continue efforts to ensure that all children are registered immediately after birth and that birth registration and the issuance of birth certificates are provided free of charge (Rwanda);

108.15 Strengthen the strategies and measures for fulfilling children's rights in the Poverty Reduction Strategy Plan (Rwanda);

108.16 Continue to provide the enabling environment for the institutions responsible for the promotion and protection of human rights and particularly by establishing a national human rights institution (Nigeria);

108.17 Establish a national human rights institution, in accordance with the Paris Principles (Poland);

108.18 Accelerate efforts to establish an independent national human rights institution which is in conformity with the Paris Principles (Sierra Leone);

108.19 Establish a national human rights institution for the promotion and protection of human rights in accordance with the Paris Principles (South Africa);

108.20 Create a national human rights institution in accordance with the Paris Principles (Timor-Leste);

108.21 Create an independent national institution for promotion and protection of human rights in conformity with Paris Principles (Togo);

108.22 Take necessary measures to create an independent mechanism to monitor the situation of human rights in conformity with the Paris Principles (Turkey);

108.23 Continue to strengthen the steps already made for the creation of a national human rights institution in conformity with the Paris Principles (Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela);

108.24 Finalize the on-going study, create and establish a national human rights institution in conformity with the Paris Principles (Cabo Verde);

108.25 Ensure that all children are registered immediately after birth, and ensure that the national legislation regulating birth registration is in line with the Convention on the Rights of the Child (South Africa);

108.26 **In order to sustain the increased rate of birth registration, take necessary measures to ensure all children an immediate registration, followed by the issuance of a birth certificate (Turkey);**

108.27 **Adopt a comprehensive strategy to combat discrimination, in particular towards poor children and children with disabilities (Egypt);**

108.28 **Reform the relevant legal framework to fully ensure the application of the principles of non-discrimination and equality in the enjoyment of civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights for persons in vulnerable situations, especially women, children and persons with disabilities (Mexico);**

108.29 **Take active measures to revise all legislation in order to fully guarantee the application of the principle of non-discrimination in domestic laws (Namibia);**

108.30 **Adopt a proactive and comprehensive strategy to eliminate discrimination against all vulnerable groups (Nigeria);**

108.31 **Enact comprehensive legislation that fully guarantees the application of the principle of non-discrimination and ensure the full enjoyment of all human rights by every member of society (South Africa);**

108.32 **Review its legislation to adopt a comprehensive strategy aimed at elimination of discrimination in all its forms and in respect of all the vulnerable groups, especially poor and disabled children (Turkey);**

108.33 **Take all necessary measures to review its domestic law and ensure that children born outside marriage are registered and enjoy their human rights on an equal condition with others (Argentina);**

108.34 **Enact and implement legislation that prohibits discrimination in employment and occupation based on disability, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, and HIV-positive status or other communicable diseases (Australia);**

108.35 **Adopt legislation that prohibits discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity (Netherlands);**

108.36 **Educate the public and law enforcement on women's legal rights, particularly in cases of rape and domestic violence, while undertaking to develop and implement a holistic strategy to prevent family violence, with the participation of all stakeholders (Canada);**

108.37 **Strengthen the effective implementation of the measures aiming at combatting discriminations and violence against women (France);**

108.38 **Comprehensively address harmful cultural practices, and increase the age of marriage to 18, in conformity with the provisions of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (Sierra Leone);**

108.39 **Take urgent steps to reduce and eliminate domestic and sexual violence against women, including measures to raise awareness of women's legal rights in consultation with civil society groups, and ensuring fair and expeditious trials of domestic and sexual violence cases (United Kingdom of Great Britain and Northern Ireland);**

108.40 **Fight against stigmatization of child victims of exploitation and sexual abuse (Djibouti);**

108.41 **Continue efforts to ensure respect for the rights of the child including developing a comprehensive national strategy to prevent and combat all forms of violence against children including domestic violence, sexual trafficking and exploitation of the children (France);**

108.42 **Prohibit corporal punishment in law as previously recommended (Germany);**

108.43 **Repeal the parental right "to punish" children in family law and define what constitutes ill-treatment in line with the State's international obligations (Germany);**

108.44 **Develop programmes and policies for the prevention, recovery and social integration of child victims of trafficking and exploitation in accordance with the outcome documents adopted at the 1996, 2001 and 2008 World Congresses against Sexual Exploitation of Children, held in Stockholm, Yokohama and Rio de Janeiro, respectively (Ireland);**

108.45 **Redouble efforts to devise a comprehensive national strategy and ensure implementation of action plans for the protection of the rights of the child, particularly in the area of prevention from child labour, violence and abuse (Philippines);**

108.46 **Continue to actively promote the explicit abolition of corporal punishment against children in its domestic legislation, aiming at its full and complete prohibition (Portugal);**

108.47 **Amend the law and expressly prohibit corporal punishment (Spain);**

108.48 **Take specific measures to combat harmful practices in law and in practice, bearing in mind the recommendations of the Committee on the Rights of the Child (Spain);**

108.49 **Amend its legislation so as to include prohibition of corporal punishment (Timor-Leste);**

108.50 **Elaborate an inclusive strategy for the protection of children, particularly concerning all forms of violence, abuse, and access to education without discrimination (Turkey);**

108.51 **Adopt a national coordination framework to combat all forms of violence against children, dealing with aspects of gender violence (Uruguay);**

108.52 **Amend existing legislation in order to prohibit all forms of corporal punishment of children in all settings, promoting positive and non-violent forms of discipline (Uruguay);**

108.53 **Elaborate and implement a strategy and national action plan for the protection of the rights of children, and ensure, in particular, to counter effectively the risk of child trafficking (Cabo Verde);**

108.54 **Take all necessary measures with a view to explicitly prohibiting all forms of corporal punishment of children in all settings, to combat violence and to enhance the promotion of children's rights, dignity and physical integrity (Brazil);**

108.55 **Design and implement awareness-raising campaigns on the benefits of access to health services to prevent curable diseases (Mexico);**

108.56 **Design and implement a sexual and reproductive health program for adolescents (Mexico);**

108.57 **Establish a national plan for universal access to education (Morocco);**

108.58 **Establish a compulsory education age that is equal to or higher than the minimum age for employment (United States of America);**

108.59 **Establish a national policy to address the rights of persons with disabilities (Maldives).**

109. **Sao Tome and Principe considers that the recommendations below cannot be accepted and would thus be noted:**

109.1 **Conduct campaigns to promote awareness among the population in general of the need to treat the elderly with dignity, and simultaneously, to eradicate practices and beliefs associated with witchcraft rituals (Portugal);**

109.2 **Deepen legislative measures to eliminate the use of harmful traditional practices associated with the belief in witchcraft, that lead to delays in medical treatment provided to children and unnecessary exacerbation of treatable conditions, as expressed by the Committee on the Rights of the Child (Argentina).**

110. **The Delegation considers that the practices mentioned in the recommendations contained in paragraphs 109.1 and 109.2 do not exist in Sao Tome and Principe.**

111. **All conclusions and/or recommendations contained in the present report reflect the position of the submitting State(s) and/or the State under review. They should not be construed as endorsed by the Working Group as a whole.**

Annex

Composition of the delegation

The delegation of Sao Tome and Principe was headed by H.E. Mr. Roberto Pedro Raposo, Minister of Justice and Human Rights and composed of the following members:

- Mme Nilda Borges da Mata, Assesseur pour les Droits de l'Homme et Politique internationale;
- M. Gregorio Santiago, Coordinateur de la Commission Interministérielle pour les Droits de l'Homme;
- M. Geisel Menezes, Membre de la Commission Interministérielle pour les Droits de l'Homme;
- Mme Marylu Quaresma Nazaré, Membre du Conseil Supérieur du Ministère Public;
- Mme Loureiro Amado Vaz Miladys, Assistant de Monsieur le Ministre.